OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES:
SOME USAGE ASPECTS

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Openness is one of the most influential drivers of change in education and training today, especially for educational organizations both in adult learning as well as in higher education [3]. Open educational resources (OER) as a manifestation of the principle of openness is gradually becoming an integral part of the educational environment in higher education.

The OER conception is based on the principle of guaranteeing a right to education for everyone.

OER are teaching, learning, and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use and re-purposing by others. OER include full courses, course materials, modules, textbooks, streaming videos, tests, software, and any other tools, materials, or techniques used to support access to knowledge [4].

There are some special OER repositories, in which they are classified by a subject area, levels of education and types of materials. Good examples of relevant OER repositories and other sites are outlined by Welch and in the annotated guide to finding OER produced by the Commonwealth of Learning [1; 2; 5]. While looking for OER in repositories the attention should be paid to the type of Creative Commons license of a resource.

The usage and adaptation of existing OER for a lecturer is more effective way in the active introduction of e-learning, than the creation of new teaching aids.

Despite the fact that there is a significant amount of OER repositories, the question of their usage in higher education is under-represented. This is due to the fact that until now the focus was on "opening up access and availability". The authors assert that transition to the stage of "improving learning quality" through OER is just in the process now.

There are 5 possible ways of using OER in materials of the training (seminar) workshop to introduce institutions to OER [1]:
– to enhance an existing course or offering by adding OER;
– to improve existing materials by replacing it with OER;
– to create new part of materials by using or re-purposing OER;
– to create new courses by using, re-using and re-purposing OER;
– use students to generate OER.

Research conducted on the impact of teachers' participation in Institute for the Study of Knowledge Management in Education OER training has shown that OER professional development workshops have supported teachers in creating, using, sharing and reusing OER. Specifically, research revealed that teachers have not only created their own OER since participating in the workshops, but have also incorporated OER into their teaching practices and have used it for their own learning [3].

References:
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